

Message Text

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45

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 EB-11 STR-08 COME-00 TRSE-00

CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7861

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2150

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, IT, KN

SUBJECT: ITALY/ NORTH KOREA

REF: ROME 2052

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF SUBSEQUENT TO REFTTEL, SOUTH KOREAN EMB COUNSELOR CONFIRMED THAT ROK WAS WATCHING CAREFULLY TO MAKE SURE THAT EVOLVING ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONTACTS BETWEEN ITALY AND DPRK DID NOT MOVE INTO AREA OF BILATERAL INTER- GOVERNMENTAL POLITICAL DIALOGUE OR DISCUSSION RE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE RECALLED THAT INITIAL VISA APPLICATION FOR RECENT NORTH KOREAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION WHICH HAD ARRIVED FROM MALTA HAD BEEN TURNED DOWN BY GOI ON GROUND OF POLITICAL REASONS OFFERED FOR DESIRE TO VISIT ITALY, BUT WAS APPROVED ON SECOND APPLICATION ONLY WHEN STRESS PLACED ON COMMERCIAL RATIONALE FOR VISIT. IN FACT, HE THOUGHT MUCH OF PARLIAMENTARY DEL EFFORT IN ROME CENTERED ON IPU MEMBERSHIP FOR NORTH KOREA TO BE DISCUSSED AT UPCOMING ABIDJAN MEETING IPU COUNCIL.

2. SOURCE EXPRESSED OPINION THAT DPRK CONTINUED TO BE INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING TRADE MISSION OFFICE IN ITALY AND WOULD PRESS FOR THIS WITH ITALIANS IN CONNECTION SPRING MARKET SURVEY MISSION TO
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NORTH KOREA AND ON OTHER OCCASIONS. HE UNDERSTOOD REPS OF NORTH KOREA PARIS TRADE MISSION, WHO HAD VISITED ITALY SEVERAL MONTHS AGO TO ARRANGE UPCOMING BALLET TOUR, HAD ALSO ASKED TO OPEN TRADE MISSION HERE AND OPINED THAT MATTER HAD ALSO BEEN RAISED BY PARLIAMENTARY DEL. SOURCE WAS PLEASED THAT MFA HAD CONSISTENTLY TURNED DOWN REQUEST. HE FEARED, HOWEVER, THAT CONTACTS WITH INDIVIDUAL ITALIAN FIRMS, E. G., RECENT VISIT TO ENI (STATE HELD PETROLEUM COMPANY -- ROME 1103), COULD LEAD TO STATIONING NORTH KOREAN REP FOR LIAISON PURPOSES AND MORE OFFICIAL TRADE MISSION COULD FOLLOW.

3. SOURCE FELT SOME ITALIAN FIRMS WERE EAGER SEE WHAT BUSINESS THEY COULD DO IN NORTH KOREA AND WERE AWARE THAT FRENCH AND GERMAN ENTERPRISES HAD BEEN ABLE EXPORT CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY. HE THOUGHT DPRK HAD LITTLE TO EXPORT TO ITALY BEYOND MINERALS, PRIMARILY LEAD, WHICH CONSTITUTED 94 PERCENT OF ITALIAN IMPORTS FROM NORTH KOREA IN FIRST NINE MONTHS 1972. VOLPE

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